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Lovebirds on an autumn walk. /By Tammy Nash

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/by Deb Reed

Pass it on

IT NEEDN'T be Thanksgiving for us to feel gratitude. When we consider the generous contributions passed forward to us along the way, we can gratefully love each influence. We can't keep all valuable 'relay batons' handed to us over time. But when we absorb knowledge, it often serves us permanently. I appreciate every gift I've accepted. Here's my own partial 'baton' list.

Grade 13 Art Room. I'd befriended Joe, a shy older classmate. He'd been exploring the music of Cat Stevens, and particularly loved the lyrics. Would I like

**DEB REED***Wind in the Attic*

to borrow an album for the weekend? I played it until I knew every word and upcoming note. Joe's impulse enriched my entire life. I'd forever choose the *Peace Train*. If only I could locate Joe to thank him for his inadvertent magic. He'd intuited that I'd also like Cat, whose gentle language helped me grow.

My baby sister. She's not a passionate chef, and unlike

her older sibling, uses actual recipes. She's made one or two kitchen mistakes, like when her cookbook suggested she add four cloves of garlic, and she thought that meant bulbs. Yet she passed genius onto me when advising that a teaspoon of sugar radically improves a homemade tomato sauce. I've been adding sugar ever since.

Miss Britnell from Saskatchewan. My heroic high school English teacher. She quoted Joni Mitchell on the blackboard, and made us look at more than words. Although I sat silently in her classroom, she was already showing me how to reach higher meaning.

My great Aunty Ilse. She was a governess in India, and periodically sent me parcels of marvellous things she'd collected there. Nutmeg complete with mace casing. A shedded boa skin. Shells with ocean sand still embedded. Victorian picture books her pupils had outgrown. I became crazy for facts and illustrations. Next I'd inhale all 16 volumes of *The Golden Book Encyclopedia*. My dad would buy one weekly with Loblaws' Lucky Green Stamps.

Other practical 'batons' I was handed - and still carry - include my mother's demo on how to darn socks. Kent, a same-age American playmate (I summer-holi-

dayed in Minnesota), introduced root beer. I'll always be able to locate the North Star, whistle with four fingers or against a blade of grass, play Crazy Eights, build campfires, skip stones, draw bunny rabbits, say 'supercalifragilisticexpialidocious' backwards, and manage *Heart and Soul* on piano.

I'm actually grateful for momentarily believing that if I swallowed apple seeds, trees would grow inside my stomach. Stepping on a crack wouldn't actually break my mother's back. And sunbeams aren't heavenly escalators for angels. I might have been able to list 'The Seven Wonders of the World', but it took me a childhood minute to learn the meaning of 'pulling my leg'.

From such I picked up a rabid need for humour, for pranks, puns and Python, for teasing with affection, marvelling at ironies, and loving others who simply - but respectfully - like to laugh. I hope, at least, that I've passed that along.

CountyLife

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melissa@haliburtonpress.com

A strong start for a healthy democracy

I could start this column by talking about what's happening in Question Period or the latest political headlines coming out of Parliament Hill, but honestly, I'm still buzzing about something much closer to home.

A few weeks ago, nearly 100 people filled the Haliburton Legion for the first session of the Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project, and if that turnout is any indication, our community is hungry for connection, conversation, and change.

The evening, titled "Engage," marked the beginning of something special: a collective effort to strengthen civic participation and make democracy more accessible and meaningful in everyday life. It wasn't a political event - it was a community one. People came not to debate, but to understand.

There were lifelong residents and new arrivals, business owners and retirees, parents and students - all gathered with a shared interest in how our local government works and how we can make it work better for everyone. Through live audience polling, participants reflected on what makes a healthy democracy, what barriers keep people from getting involved, and what issues matter most here at home.

The answers revealed both hope and honesty. People care deeply about Haliburton County, but they also want to see more transparency, collaboration,

and opportunities to be heard. Many admitted they weren't entirely sure what county councillors do or how decisions are made about roads, housing, and recreation.

But that kind of curiosity and that willingness to learn is where engagement begins. I really believe that democracy isn't a distant concept; it's a living, breathing thing that depends on us showing up. It's built not just in council chambers or at the ballot box, but around kitchen tables, in community halls, and through conversations with neighbours.

When people understand how things work, they're more likely to take part. When they see themselves reflected in local decisions, they start to trust the system again. And when they trust the system, they help keep it strong. That's how democracy renews itself; not through one big moment, but through small, steady acts of participation.

What we witnessed at the Legion was precisely that: democracy in motion. Ordinary people taking an evening to learn, listen, and connect. It reminded me that the health of our democracy isn't measured by how loudly people shout, but by how many people are willing to pull up a chair. Since that first session, the momentum has continued.

When you're reading this, the second event in the Voices & Votes Speaker Series, "Finding Your Why," will have



JESSICA SLADE
Plain Talk Politics

Simple Inertia

I RESIGNED from a volunteer position this week and it was so emotional. I was of course thanked for my service and offered a huge card. I knew it was the right decision for my life balance, but it was such a sad feeling to be done with the group and the role. I was resolved, but oh so very sad to move on.

I am sure we have all faced these kinds of decisions, where we knew what was right and we made up our mind, but that emotions started to creep in. A friend called it simple inertia. We like staying still and right where we are, even when we know it's not quite right for us. The great thing about inertia though is that it works in the opposite, once a rock is rolling it's hard to slow down.

Maybe this week as autumn colours add magic everywhere we look take a little stock of how you are spending your days and weeks. Are there things

that you are doing because changing seems too hard, too emotional, too scary? Maybe look those things over and measure how much your feelings are just about inertia, that it is hard to make a change from something comfortable to something rolling, even when it's a good something.

When we start moving in a direction, who knows what we might find. When we take over the navigation of our lives with a bit more intent there could be some great opportunities open up. Or if you take a look and decide you are exactly where you need to be, the fresh look will bring fresh ideas and an equal sense of resolve in having looked again and decided to stay and grow from where you are.

It's the days that have to move through, be purposeful with each and our weeks will take care of themselves and abound in purpose and promise.



TERESA JORDAN
*Community Living
Contemplations*

already taken place in Wilberforce on Oct. 7, featuring former MPs Barry Devolin and Maryam Monsef. Their conversation focused on what civic leadership means and what motivates people to get involved.

Like the first, it will have been rooted in one simple truth: democracy works best when it feels personal; when it's something you can see yourself in. Whether you care about the environment, housing, youth, or local business, there's a place for you in this conversation.

The Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project is still in its early days, but it's already proving that

people want to be part of the process; they just need a way in. And that's what these sessions are all about: building that bridge between community and council, between ideas and action.

If we keep asking questions, listening to one another, and finding common ground, we can strengthen not only our democracy, but our sense of belonging too.

Because at its heart, democracy isn't about politics. It's about people. And that's what plain talk politics is all about - making democracy something we can all understand, care about, and take part in.

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Take a library trip this fall

THOMAS SMITH

County Life Staff

The Haliburton County Public Library (HCPL) has rolled out a brand new initiative that encourages everyone to see the beautiful spectrum of fall colours on our trees this year.

The HCPL's Fall Library Passport Challenges started on Sept. 16 and will continue until Oct. 31. Every HCPL branch will have Fall Passports that visitors can pick up.

Each library location will also have a special sticker that you can affix to your passport.

When you visit each library, there will be a fall-themed activity that visitors may take part in. While you are there, staff challenge you to find the hidden bookworm at every branch and share why you love your public library with others. There will also be rotating book displays, children's activities, and regularly scheduled programming that you can plan your visits around.

"I enjoy seeking new initiatives to offer our community members and the passport program was really the collaboration of multiple branch staff members thinking how we wish the public could see how big and beautiful our library system is," said Shawna Gamblen, programming and outreach coordinator for HCPL. "Especially in the fall and the idea

of a passport to see them all was born."

In a world where our attention is being drawn at every step by technology, having a physical passport that you can keep becomes a special tool.

"A physical passport makes the experience tangible and memorable - it's something residents can carry, show off, and be reminded of between visits," said Gamblen. "Adding a gamified element like collecting stamps turns library use into a fun challenge that encourages people to explore multiple branches, discover new services, and feel a sense of achievement. For the community, it creates excitement and connection; for the library, it boosts engagement and showcases all that the system has to offer."

Every branch of the HCPL has something special to offer guests.

The Highland Grove branch of the HCPL is featured on the front cover of the Fall Passport. Tucked into a colourful hillside, the Highland Grove branch hosts the Savouring Stories live cooking program.

The Minden Hills branch is located beside the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, sharing the same roof. Gamblen says that by this proximity, the environment fosters a vibrant hub for art, culture, and learning.

The Dysart branch overlooks Head Lake Park, making it the perfect place to check out a book and read outside, says Gamblen.

"Every branch has its own charm, and together they showcase the stunning landscapes and natural beauty that make our county such a wonderful place to read, learn, and connect," said Gamblen.

The HCPL Fall Passport Program is open to all ages. An additional benefit to the passport program would be visitors making a day trip out of the program, visiting restaurants, local stores, and other tourist attractions. Places that you may not have visited yet around Haliburton County.

The library has eight locations across the county. These locations include Cardiff, Dorset, Gooderham, Haliburton, Highland Grove, Minden Hills, Stanhope and Wilberforce.

When completing your passport, staff have asked to use the hashtag #FallForHCPL on all your social media sites.

"The entire county is so photogenic right now with the beautiful colours," said Gamblen. "I am hoping it will spark a community pride and connection by showing how people across the county are 'falling for' their library together."

Once your Fall Passport is completed, you will be entered to win a cozy prize pack, filled with all the wonderful fall essentials.

The HCPL would like to thank Rexall Haliburton, Country Pickins, Master's Book Store, and Foodland Haliburton for their support of this new program.

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The evolution of busy

IF YOU ever need proof that humankind is not as smart as we think we are, consider the fact that we are not the only animal who uses tools.

Chimpanzees, orangutans, monkeys, crows, ravens, sea otters, elephants, dolphins, octopuses, vultures, crocodiles, archerfish, beavers and many other animals have also been documented as tool users.



STEVE GALEA

Beyond 35

But here's the thing. We are the only species stupid enough to create enough tools to keep us perpetually busy.

Prior to that no one had any grasp upon the concept of being busy at all – which is why God warned Adam and Eve not to pick apples.

I guess we should have known things were headed in the wrong direction after the first caveman do-it-yourselfer decided that he needed more than a sharp stick to do some cave renovations. (Back then, renos consisted of using the sharp stick to remove the previous inhabitant.)

Soon after, however, we took a wrong turn. Before long, primitive man was inventing throwing rocks, clubs, shovels and the like. And those were just to use on the people who noticed that he missed a spot when painting.

If we had only left it at that, we might have been fine.

But could our ancestors leave well enough alone? No sir.

One day one of them went and invented the rake.

"What's that for?" One of his neighbours asked.

"You know when leaves fall from trees after summer?" the fellow replied.

"Yes," said his neighbour.

"Well, this thing helps you organize them into piles that you will eventually take away," he said.

"Does someone buy them? Are they valuable like grain."

"No."

"So why do this?"

"It's so you can see your front lawn," he quipped.

"What's a lawn?" his neighbour asked.

"Well, you plant grass seeds on a patch of ground, water it regularly, aerate the area, hope for good summer weather and then watch it grow."

"Why? Is it good to eat?"

"No, but it looks nice," he replied.



Fall by Tammy Nash

"All the time?"

"No, when it gets too long it looks unruly, so you have to cut it."

"With what?"

"Right now I'm using a sharp piece of obsidian I bought at the cave and garden centre, but later I plan on inventing a machine that you push around the lawn that will cut grass automatically," he answered.

As if that was not enough, some enterprising fellow created the concept of weeds and weeding too.

Before long, our ancient ancestors went from having a leisurely 18 hours a day to hunt, fish, and outrun cave bears to having a couple of hours every other weekend to enjoy these pastimes.

Mostly because they had not dropped the guy who

invented the lawn mower and rake into an active volcano when he first introduced the concepts.

This history-altering mistake eventually led to the phrase, "I'd like to, but I'm too busy."

Which was fine for cave women who were about to be clubbed and dragged by their hair by a new suitor, but not so great for the rest of us.

Soon creating more stuff to do became the norm for humanity and the main reason punctuation was invented. I can personally attest that I have lost an estimated 12 years of my leisure time to placing needless commas between words.

I'd explain that further, but right now I'm way too busy.

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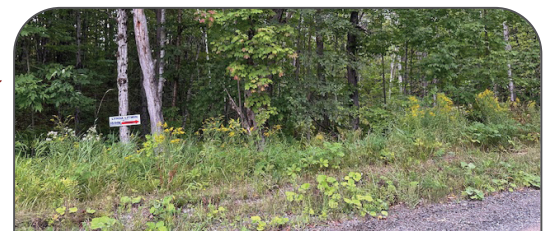
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The beauty of boredom

IT'S BEEN said that life is what happens when you're busy making other plans. But what if we have that all wrong? What if life isn't what happens when you're busy, but instead, when you're bored?

This is an age where we constantly feel the need to satiate ourselves with stimulation. We all do it. Our absent-minded draw to grab our phones when there's a moment of quiet. A gap in the conversation, a blip in the ongoing drawl of busyness that surrounds us.



EMILY STONEHOUSE
 County Life Editor

We lack the ability to sit in that stillness. We instantly fill the void with fidgeting, a reprieve from reality.

And while an aimless scroll may feel low-risk, like a little earned break from facing forward, in reality, we aren't designed to process this much. We were built to process the present, to focus on one face at a time.

Not the constant inundation of news. I heard

someone say the other day that 'all news is bad news', and they're not wrong. It seems that every time we scroll through our screens, something terrible has happened.

But we have to remember that everything we see is not necessarily real. It's a sensationalized version of daily news; rigged and tweaked to grab your attention.

And don't get me wrong, major things are happening in the world. Things we should absolutely care about.

But we can't fill every crevice and crease of our brains with the constant babbling creek of information.

We need to step away. We need a break. We need to be bored.

I have vivid memories of long and lazy summer days, finding my mom somewhere in a garden around our house, and breezing over to her, complaining of being bored.

But instead of my mom actively filling those cavities of chaos that so randomly presented themselves, she would task me with finding my own fun.

Open-ended activities. Crafts, bubbles, dress-up, LEGO. Things that would allow me to dive in, and open the windows of creativity.

I miss being bored. My own kids don't complain of boredom these days. Probably because we're not modelling it for them. Both my husband and I have been known to grab our phones during a moment of quiet; catching up on rogue emails and filling the busyness of our brains with online chatter.

We need to get back to sitting in silence. To not feeding the voracious monster of online news that only gets bigger and stronger the longer we scroll. We need to remember what it feels like to be bored.

Because in the peak moments of boredom, that's when the windows of creativity open themselves up to the breeze. That's when our minds can take a break from the rigidity of black and white basics and find form in their colours and chaos. We have to let ourselves be bored in order to tap into that; we can't keep filling the voids with superficial substance in an effort to disconnect.

We're in control. And we need to step away. We need a break. We need to be bored.

Top 10 ways to justify the leaves that are still on your lawn

HERE WE are again, with yet another carpet of leaves on our lawns. By my estimation this is the 16th wave. At times like this, I believe a person would be justified in giving up.

But, of course, this is not acceptable to many people who seem to enjoy herding leaves. For the rest of us, here are 10 reasons to justify the remaining leaves on your lawn.



STEVE GALEA
 Humour Columnist

1. Ever since "frog incident," I am triggered by the colour green.
2. I am using them as a tool to ensure no one sneaks up on our house.
3. Would clean them up, if not for my pathological fear of futile endeavours.
4. It's time for other men in the neighbourhood to look good by comparison.
5. Trying to create environmentally friendly, soft-landing zones for exhausted migratory birds.
6. Waiting for my crazy glue shipment and the opportunity to put them all back.
7. Trying to hide lawn from turf thieves.
8. Pretty sure somewhere in there is my contact lens.
9. If we pick up after the trees, how are they ever going to learn?
10. Don't have a leaf blower, but I do have three cans of beans and a bad idea.

Mist

Dawn yawning outside the window, hills kissed by mist,
 blotting the molting trees shedding their leaves, cradled by Air as they float toward the ground,
 to join their con-freres shrouding the forest floor, out there, somewhere, beyond where my eyes can see,
 only mist and this square of Sky, from my window view, how many leaves have loosened from their trees
 since I blinked my eyes awake, leaving their branches a splinter lighter, less than the weight of an eyelash,
 0 as they flutter through Air, the sound of their landing, soft as Breath, breathing in sleep,
 heaps of them piling up on the forest floor and on the grass outside the window,
 their faces pasted to the earth, before they seep into it after Rain, leaving traces of themselves behind,
 these shadow leaves imprinting themselves on the earth, to show that they were here, year after year,
 the cycle repeating itself, trees losing their leaves, yet still they stand, weathering every season,
 the splendour of fall, fleeting, my eyes feasting on leaves each day,
 waiting for the mist to lift to reveal the rusting hills,
 a burnt orange leaf flutters past the window, like the wing of an exotic bird, I watch it land,
 the grass littered with other leaves from neighbouring trees, some of the leaves curling into themselves,
 like me, some mornings, a shiver slithering through my limbs as I cocoon myself in the comforter,
 wondering whether it's the chill of looming illness or the change of season that grips my body so fiercely,
 early morning mist smudging my thoughts, as I cower in bed for a few minutes longer,
 watching another leaf float past the window, veins of red bleeding into the green,
 the leaf not fully ready to fall, yet it did, my eyes wondering why, as I peer out at the square of grey Sky,
 waiting for the mist to lift, to reveal the hills and their tapestry of trees,
 flecks of gold and red threading through their branches, I yawn as dawn bleeds into morning,
 curling deeper beneath the comforter that remains true to its name, for a few minutes longer,
 though my minutes were up a while ago, lying quiet and still, listening to my Breath, breathe,
 my body resisting the urge to sink back into sleep, as leaves loosen from their trees, out there, somewhere,
 mist kissing their faces as they fall, the forest floor cradling them when they land,
 surrounded by all the other leaves that have fallen, and the trees that still stand,
 their branches reaching up, toward the breaking light.

Sylvie Kalenda

Fall Colours



Reflections by Tammy Nash



Early sunrise on Dark Lake by Vivien Mausz



Skyline lookout by Jill Moulton



Winding road by Tammy Nash

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Are you ready for a low maintenance life style? Check this one out. Hunter Creek Estates: a bright, 2-bed, 2-bath home in a 50+ land lease community, just 5 mins from Minden. Built in 2005, this home features large windows, spacious living room, lovely kitchen, primary with ensuite and walk-in closet. Updated septic and piers. Enjoy a warm community with great neighbours.

Terry Carr & Drew Staniforth
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705-935-1011
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\$1,199,000

**1053 Cheerful Lane
BENOIR LAKE**

- 705' frontage
- Southwest Exposure
- Cottage + Guest House
- 5 bedrooms, 2 baths
- Rippled sand beach
- Level lot with pines
- 3 lake chain, Benoir/Elephant/Baptiste

 Scan to view the listing!

FOR SALE!

VINCE DUCHENE

ALLEN LAKE \$399,900

- Boating on beautiful Allen Lake
- 3 bed/1 bath, 3 season cottage
- Open concept, cozy inviting layout
- 2 w/os to wrap-around deck
- Gently sloping lot; nicely treed
- Rocky shore; deeper off dock; NW ex
- Fab swimming, fishing & boating
- Holding tank, water from lake, shed
- Accessed by seasonal private rd

Rick Forget
Broker
705-457-0580
haliburtonhighlands-remax.ca

7 STOUFFER ST \$399,999

Charming and fully renovated 2 Bed-room home (2024 updates)
Main floor living, new vinyl flooring throughout
New 5 piece bathroom
Includes 2024 SS kitchen appliances
Attached 2 Car Garage
Municipal water and sewers
Private yard with treed border
MOVE IN READY & minutes from downtown Minden

Jackie Hardman
Sales Representative
705-879-8041
jackiedhardman@gmail.com

EAGLE LAKE \$1,310,000

Beautiful home w/ 4 acres /waterfall & 347 ft. of shoreline on Pine Lake. Mn. Fl. open KIT & LR design w/electric FP & separate DR, guest BATH, master B.R. w/ ensuite & walk in closet & lg 4 season sunroom. Finished walkout basement w/radiant in-floor heat, large FAM room w/propane FP & bar. 2 BR, laundry & BATH on lower level. Lakeside deck, sandy shoreline & stone patio w/fire pit. Att GAR w/ workshop. Year round road, close to West Guilford, Lakeside Golf Club & Sir Sams Ski/Ride, approx. 12 min from Haliburton. This is a must see property to appreciate!

Deb Lambe
Sales Representative
705-854-0103
debra.lambe@gmail.com



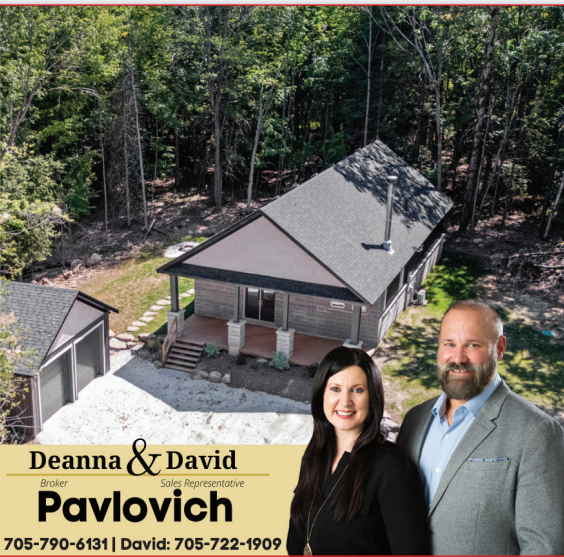
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2166 BLAIRHAMPTON ROAD \$499,000

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705-455-2034
ted@tedvasey.ca

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- * 3300' of Year-Round Road Frontage
- * Nearby Access to Snowmobile Trails System
- * Perfectly Poised For Those With A Passion For The Great Outdoors



Ken Barry
Broker 705-754-5280
Jacquie Barry
Realtor® 705-457-0652
www.kenbarry.com
Out Standing In Our Field

HUNTER CREEK ESTATES - \$289,000



Are you ready for a low maintenance life style? Check this one out. Hunter Creek Estates: a bright, 2-bed, 2-bath home in a 50+ land lease community, just 5 mins from Minden. Built in 2005, this home features large windows, spacious living room, lovely kitchen, primary with ensuite and walk-in closet. Updated septic and piers. Enjoy a warm community with great neighbours.



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- Accessed by seasonal private rd



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Broker
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haliburtonhighlands-remax.ca

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SOLD



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Main floor living, new vinyl flooring throughout
New 5 piece bathroom
Includes 2024 SS kitchen appliances
Attached 2 Car Garage
Municipal water and sewers
Private yard with treed border
MOVE IN READY & minutes from downtown Minden



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Deb Lambe
Sales Representative
705-854-0103
debra.lambe@gmail.com

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lynda@lyndalitwin.ca

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705-455-7500
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John Parish 705-457-5485
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Cheryl Smith
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705-455-2500
info@cherylsmithremax
cherylsmithremax.com

2430 HADLINGTON ROAD \$885,000



This custom built (2022) home offers serene privacy and breathtaking forest views. The warm, rustic interior features natural wood finishes. Expansive windows fill the space, inviting the outdoors in. Enjoy tranquil mornings on the deck, and peaceful evenings surrounded by the quiet beauty of nature in every season. Massive garage for a workshop with lots of parking for large vehicles. Just under 10 acres.



Sue Sotiriou
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905-715-4569
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Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.



Moose by Tammy Nash



Cleaning chipmunk by Debi Ireland



Duck by Debi Ireland



Beaver snack by Tammy Nash



Otter swim by Tammy Nash



Black squirrel by Vivien Mausz



Visiting owl by Tammy Nash

Razzamataz ready for new season

EMILY STONEHOUSE

County Life Editor

For nearly 40 years, Razzamataz Kids' Shows have brought high-quality, diverse and affordable theatre to children and families in Haliburton County.

And this season will be no different.

Chair of the not-for-profit organization, Nicole Stewart, has worked diligently to source stand-out theatre to bring back to the community. "Last year, I met with Children's Theatre Presenters from across Northern Ontario to develop an exciting and interesting line-up of performers to tour in the region," she said. "Each year, we work together with Ontario Presents to choose high-quality, diverse performances and artists to come to our small towns. In the spring, I also visited the Ottawa Children's Festival to search for professional Canadian and International shows that we could bring back to the county to perform."

It takes dedication and hard work, but Stewart and the volunteer supporters she works with believes in bringing theatre to kids in the community. Last year, in an effort to expand their audiences, they completed a grant to bring a show to the local schools, allowing 250 kids to see a performance, completely free of charge.

This year, they will be bringing that initiative back. "This season, we're inviting children from Stuart Baker and Cardiff Elementary School to enjoy *The Old Man and the River*, *WeeFestival*, *ON*," she said. "Through this new initiative,



/submitted

we are able to reach a large audience of children and share the wonder of high-quality theatre while breaking down financial barriers to the arts."

Stewart noted that these performances are made possible through the generous support of the Haliburton County Development Corporation, Canoe FM, The Haliburton Arts Council, Kennisis Lake Cottage Association, the Rotary Club of Haliburton and the Trillium Lakes District School Board.

On top of the free performances for the schools, Razzamataz will once again be offering four public shows, catered

to kids of all ages, with all welcome to attend. The season will be kicking off with *Silly Billy*; a whimsical and heart-felt dance-theatre production blending hoop dance, ballet, puppetry, and storytelling. At the heart of the story is Billy, a rare white buffalo, unhappy with his uniqueness, who embarks on a quest to find the mythical Unicorn. Through playful mishaps, enchanting adventures, and moments of self-discovery, Billy learns to embrace his difference and takes his rightful place as the legendary great white buffalo of the plains.

Other shows include: the *Chimera*

Project, ON with ballet and Indigenous dance, shadow puppets and storytelling; *Somebody Loves You Mr. Hatch*, *Axis Theatre*, BC with puppets, singing and a heart-warming story about a secret admirer; *The Old Man and the River*, *WeeFestival*, ON - a story without words featuring beautiful puppetry; and environmental-themed music from award-winning Canadian musician, Chris McKhool.

Stewart noted that on top of the shows, there will also be three workshops including Indigenous hoop dancing, puppets and music. More information and tickets can be purchased at razzamataz.ca.

The shows take dedication and time, and Stewart and the Razzamataz committee are thrilled to put in the work, and bring these shows to the community. But it takes a village to keep the programs afloat. "We are run entirely by volunteers and funded by government partners and the generous donations of non-profit and charitable organizations in the community," said Stewart. "The work that we do relies on donations and the goodwill of others. In order to continue to do what we do and to do more, we are searching for financial support from business and individuals - please consider becoming a sponsor today."

Stewart hopes to continue to bring these shows to the community for many years to come, and welcomes all to the performances over the season. *Silly Billy* kicks off the season on Oct. 26 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion at 2 p.m.

Inside out; exploring plein air works across the county

EMILY STONEHOUSE

County Life Editor

Where in the world would you find Farquhar Creek in Wilberforce cascading next to the Hawk Lake Log Chute?

The two destinations have many miles between them, but in the Rails End Gallery, they're side by side.

In the En Plein Air show currently displayed at the local gallery, 20 finalists were selected to be displayed amongst 67 entries submitted. The pieces currently not hung up are available for virtual viewing at www.railsendgallery.com.

"I'm really pleased with the variety we received," said gallery curator Laurie Jones. "This place is more than lakes and trees and sky, though they are compelling subjects."

En plein air literally translates to being outside, in the open air, a movement that gained popularity in the mid-1800s, as paints and canvases became more transportable.

The Group of Seven were masters at the art form, using wooden plaques and oil paints to capture the living essence of the rugged outdoors. And it has evolved since then, of course. As landscapes have gradually urbanized and artist capacity has become limited, the subjects and styles of the pieces have shifted with growing pains.

But it presents the outdoors in a whole new light.



Caboose Bike Hub by James Brown depicts the iconic orange train car in Head Lake Park. The painting won the County Tourism award at the plein air show. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

In the current gallery exhibit, while there is a steady weaving backdrop of living, breathing forests, there are also restaurants, sign posts, campfires, and one bright orange caboose; subjects that have plunked themselves into the setting, and have become natural components of the great outdoors, in this space we call home.

The pieces each needed to be created either this year or last, and Jones noted

that the number one criteria was that the painting must depict some space in Haliburton County. "I think we're onto something with this idea," she noted, referencing that many artists who submitted works are dabbling in the spontaneous outdoor art endeavours for the first time.

With so much interest abound, Jones has created a small booklet for plein air enthusiasts. "You already love hiking,

paddling, or simply being outside..." opens the book. "... plein air painting is a natural next step toward creatively connecting with your surroundings."

The booklet goes on to encourage artists to press pause, to be present. It provides tips and tricks for plein air, as well as a tool at the back of the book to use as a frame when capturing an expansive backdrop. "There are no mistakes," reads the booklet, "only lessons."

The booklet will be available via Rails End social media channels, or at the gallery itself.

While many artists take their work indoors to complete the piece, Jones noted that the piece can lose its authenticity if that is done. "It's all about spontaneity," she said, referencing the dedication to capturing a moment in time; the light on the waters just so, dips in the sun ever-changing.

It's an art form that is not for the faint of heart. With the nature of the great outdoors ever-changing, ever-shifting, no two scenes will ever be the same. So to capture that moment in time, it takes a certain level of bravery, shared Jones.

The En Plein Air Haliburton show was supported by the County of Haliburton and Haliburton County Development Corporation. To view all pieces or to see the winners of the submissions, visit www.railsend.com. The show will be on display in the gallery until Nov. 8. "It's really just all about being outside," said Jones. "It's a new way to experience the outdoors."

Tiny, off-grid cabins make for a perfect fall getaway in Highlands

ADAM FRISK

County Life Staff

The Haliburton Highlands has transformed into a breathtaking tapestry of crimson, gold, and orange as forests begin their annual transformation, and for the “fall peepers” looking to embed themselves in the autumn spectacle, Cabinscape’s tiny, off-grid cabins might just be for you.

For more than eight years, Cabinscape has been offering a unique solution for those who want to immerse themselves in the backcountry of some of the province’s most spectacular forests without the complexities of camping.

Husband and wife team, John Loerchner and Laura Mendes, have built Cabinscape from a single cabin on a patch of land in eastern Ontario to a fleet of 30 tiny, off-grid cabins scattered across the province, with a large concentration in the Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve.

The company’s roots trace back to the couple’s love for backcountry camping. After having their daughter, they wanted to continue their wilderness adventures, but found the traditional experience challenging with a young child.

“When we had our daughter, we really wanted to still get her out into the wilderness experiencing, you know, isolated, beautiful nature scapes,” Mendes said in a telephone interview. “But we didn’t feel quite comfortable taking her into the interior of Algonquin.

So they searched for a middle ground, a comfortable cabin that still offered the feeling of being deep in the wilderness.

“But we couldn’t really find anything that really, you know, checked off all the boxes for us,” the Cabinscape co-founder said.

And from there, Cabinscape was born with its first tiny, solar-powered cabin. The company now has 30 properties, which were built to be mobile and fabricated in a factory, spread out in secluded locations



Bone cabin in Haliburton Forest on Bone Lake. /submitted

throughout Ontario.

The partnership with Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve has been a major success for Cabinscape. Several years ago, after hearing about the company’s unique concept, Haliburton Forest reached out to partner with them. The collaboration began with two cabins and has since expanded to 12.

“It’s been a labour of love, and we just love Haliburton in general. It’s so beautiful,” Mendes said. “Everyone often thinks about the Muskokas as cottage country, but there’s just so much beauty in Haliburton.

“Our Haliburton cabins are among our most popular cabins out of our fleet, because of all of the experiences, outdoor experiences that they can do, we find our guests are not just people that want to come and sit in

the cabin. They want to get out, they want to adventure,” Mendes said.

Cabinscape offers three different levels of remoteness for its guests in Haliburton Forest, allowing visitors to “choose their own adventure.”

There are low-remote cabins that are easily accessible by car and located near the Haliburton Forest Basecamp, which includes a restaurant, convenience store, and the popular Wolf Centre. Then there are medium-remote cabins that offer a balance of seclusion and convenience, while high-remote cabins are situated deep within the forest, on untouched, non-motorized lakes.

“If you want a cabin that’s really close to the Wolf Centre, and you just want to wake up and have someone cook for you, and you can just walk over to the local restaurant there, versus one of our high-remote cabins, where you’re pretty much out there and it takes, a good 20 minutes to get back to basecamp,” Mendes said. “There are lots of options for everybody.”

Mendes said Cabinscape’s most popular cabin also happens to be in Haliburton Forest. The Bone Cabin is a medium-remote property on a private, untouched lake, known for its beautiful sunset views, she said.

Cabinscape’s success is fuelled by a desire to make the outdoors accessible to everyone. The cabins are equipped with solar panels for power and propane furnaces for heating. In the winter, running water from lake sources is turned off, but potable water is provided. The goal is to provide a nature-focused experience while still offering creature comforts, Mendes explained.

“We really encourage our guests to get out and check out the local shops in town,” she said.

Cabinscape has even created packages with local businesses, like Abbey Gardens, to help support the community and give guests a comprehensive travel experience that goes beyond just the cabin.

“Haliburton is just an adventure playground,” Mendes said. “What a great opportunity to go on a fall colours road trip, stop at our cabins, and get out to downtown Haliburton to check out a cafe and grab a pumpkin spice latte.”

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Wellness Connections Program

When: Beginning Oct. 16 running every two weeks until Nov. 20 from 10 a.m. to noon
Where: Dysart Library in Haliburton Village
Offered in partnership with the Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Ontario Health Team and Haliburton Highlands Health Services. This free program is designed to help older adults maintain independence, build healthy habits, and learn strategies to avoid frailty. The program is a 4-session group series with supportive discussions and practical tips for healthy living. Online modules also available. To register, call 705-457-2941 extension 2932.

Craft a Magical Potion Bottle

When: Oct. 18 from 11 a.m. to noon
Where: Minden Hills Library
Step into our cauldron of creativity this October. A bewitching activity for all ages! All materials will be provided, recommended for ages 5+. Registration required. Call 705-457-2241 or email programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca to register.

Learn about the Ancient Art of Card Reading

When: Saturday, Oct. 18 from 2 to 3 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Library
As October casts its golden glow and the veil between worlds grows thin, step into the enchanting realm of tarot with intuitive guide Catherine Harper. Registration required, drop ins welcome. Recommended for ages 14+. Call 705-457-2241 or email rograms@haliburtonlibrary.ca to register.

Service Canada at the Library

When: Tuesday, Oct. 21 from 10 a.m. to noon and 12:30 to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Branch of the Haliburton County Library

Service Canada Representatives will be available to assist residents with a variety of services. These include Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan/Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Social Insurance Numbers, The Canada Disability Benefit, Canadian Dental Care Plan and intake for Passport applications. Residents are required to book a 15-minute appointment in advance by calling the Minden Hills Library at 705-286-2491 or email programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca

Savouring Stories

When: Thursday, Oct. 23 from 11 a.m. to noon
Where: Highland Grove Library
Join us for a lively and engaging food conversation circle where food, culture, and history meet. We explore the fascinating world of food through stories, history, and shared experiences. No registration required.

PA Day Movie

When: Friday, Oct. 24 from 1 to 3 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills and Dysart Libraries
Step back in time with Disney’s Dinosaur movie – a heartwarming tale of courage, friendship, and survival in a prehistoric world. Movie is rated G. No registration required.

Haunted Haliburton

When: Saturday, Oct. 25 from 11 a.m. to noon
Where: Dysart Library in Haliburton Village
Step into the shadows of Haliburton’s past and uncover the stories that still echo through our hills, lakes, and historic halls. Join us for a spine-tingling presentation with Kate Butler from the Haliburton Highlands Museum, as she shares eerie local legends, haunted places, and the mysterious tales passed down through generations. All ages welcome. No registration required.

Create your very own Magical Potion Bottle

When: Saturday, Oct. 25 from 2 to 3 p.m.
Where: Dysart Library in Haliburton Village
Step into our cauldron of creativity this October. A bewitching activity for all ages! All materials will be provided, recommended for ages 5+. Registration required. Call 705-457-2241 or email programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca to register.

Beavers - Nature’s Engineers Land Trust Discovery Days

When: Saturday, Oct. 25, from 10 a.m. to Noon
Where: 1225 25th Line Road, Algonquin Highlands (parking available on site)
Join Sheila Ziman & Mary Anne Barkhouse to learn more about beavers. These remarkable animals are the world’s best engineers, creating new habitats and enriching biodiversity as they work. See how Sheila has been living cooperatively (more or less!) with the beavers in her pond. See beaver lodges, tunnels and other evidence of their work up close and learn about a variety of ways to manage beaver activity on your property. Visit the HHLT website to register. Admission by donation. This event is funded by TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.

Registration Now Open for Youth Curling

When: League starts Tuesday, Oct. 28 - Every Tuesday from 4 to 6 p.m. until March
Where: Haliburton Curling Club
It’s just \$60 and includes all basic equipment. A great way to have fun and learn new skills! Application forms are available at JD Hodgson Public School or from Russ Duhaime. For more information on the program, contact Russ at 705-457-0497

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Minden Condo for sale. Garden Suite No balconies above. Patio and small yard/garden. 1012 sq ft open concept. lg bright master bdrm/5 pc ensuite. laundry/pantry. Den/guest bdrm. 2nd 4 pc bath. Asking \$475,000. Call 705-286-6933

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Tuesday: Last Tuesday of the month-liver luncheon with one alternative 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Wednesday: Mixed darts 7:30 p.m. Canteen opens at 6 p.m.
Thursday: General meeting (3rd week) Members only 7:30 p.m.
Friday: Chair yoga 10 a.m. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. play at 6:45 p.m.
Saturday: Meat draw 5 p.m. Canteen opens at 3 p.m.
Sunday: Ladies Auxiliary meeting (members only) 3rd week at 2 p.m.
Special events: May 11 Mother's day breakfast \$13.00/ person
Friday night BBQ
Hall rentals available at reasonable prices. Call 705-488-3462 or 705-928-7105. We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo 7 p.m. FirstWed of each month with jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541.
Schedules are subject to change without notice.
Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Hours - Sunday: Special Events Only, Monday: 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday: Closed, Wednesday: 2 to 10 p.m., Thursday: 2 to 10 p.m., Friday: 2 to 11 p.m., Saturday: 2 to 9 p.m.

Monday:
Oct. 20, 27 Darts \$5/player 7 p.m.
Wednesday:
Oct. 22, 29 Darts \$4/player 2 p.m.
Quick Supper Menu changes weekly \$10. 5 to 6:30 pm.
Cribbage League 6:30 – Sign up at the Legion
Thursday:
Oct. 16, 23, 30 Horseshoes \$5/player 7 p.m.
Oct. 23 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Friday:
Oct. 17, 31 Fish and Chips 1pc/\$15, 2pc/\$20
Oct. 24 Community Care 55+ Lunch \$17, noon
Wings and Jam Session \$15/lb 5 to 8 p.m.
Saturday:
Oct.18 Pop-Up Darts Supplies Sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,
Horseshoes Tournament. Registration at 10 a.m. Play starts at 11 a.m. \$20
Open Mic. 2 to 6 p.m.. Free. 3 p.m. Meat Draw, Trivia Night 7 p.m. \$5 per player
Oct. 25 Halloween Karaoke Party 8pm-1am. Free
Call the Legion for more info 705-448-2221
Sunday:
Oct. 19 L.A Breakfast \$10. 9 to 11 a.m. Call the Legion for more info 705-448-2221
Oct. 25 Halloween Karaoke Party 8pm-1am. Free
Call the Legion for more info 705-448-2221

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Forest owners postpone deadline

Trails will be open and winter businesses are ready and raring to go

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

Local business owners are breathing easier this week following the Haliburton Forest Owners' Association's decision to back down — for now — on its threat to close off private trails this winter to snowmobilers and skiers.

The Nov. 1st deadline to close the trails was being used to put pressure on the provincial government to reinstate in some form the Managed Forest Tax Rebate program. In a press release issued Wednesday, HFOA member Peter Schleifenbaum announced the postponement of the deadline until Nov. 1st of 1995.

"Recognizing the combined interests of the community and the economic losses that may occur... coupled with the apparent agenda of this government, the association resolved to provide to the community a window to express its concerns for remedies to the government and decided to extend the deadline," wrote Schleifenbaum, co-owner of Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve.

In the statement, Schleifenbaum accused the province of attempting "to shift the promotion of winter activities (especially snowmobiling) and related tourism to (Northern Ontario)" and of being "uninterested in the concerns of the local snowmobiling industry and its

impact on the economies of Central Ontario."

The press release also said that the forest owners' motivation behind the extension was "to demonstrate their concern for their community, which they are not willing to penalize for this government's incompetence and hidden agendas."

With the threat of trail closures now behind them for this season at least, local businesses who rely on winter tourism are "raring and ready to go," said Brian Watts, president of the Haliburton County Snowmobile Association (HCSA), which despite having contingency plans in place if the closure occurred, would have been seriously affected by the shut down.

"Naturally we are very pleased with the decision and that cooler heads prevailed," Watts said. "I was hoping it would happen because you never want to look to the worst."

With the annual International Snowmobiler's Show being held last weekend in Markham, the timing for the announcement could not have been better, said Watts. "We are getting ready for the show so that was part of the urgency for us and now we'll have a positive story to tell to people," said Watts prior to the weekend show.

Gloria Carnochan of

Backwoods Marina, who recently launched a letter-writing campaign to members of parliament and Premier Bob Rae, said that while she is "ecstatic" about the forest owners' decision, "just because the pressure has been taken off of us as business owners doesn't mean we should take the pressure off the government" to find a solution to the owners' dilemma. "We are grateful for the decision made by property owners but we hope the public will continue to write letters and do what is in their power to get this issue resolved."

Doug Kaufmann, manager of Kennis Lake Marina, said that with the threat of the closure no longer hanging over their heads, "it's certainly going to relieve our customers as far as doubts of whether or not they should purchase or rent a snowmobile. It should definitely help our sales."

Winter bookings for the marina, he added, "are way down. Usually by now we have a fair

Please turn to page 5

Accusations and "dirty politics" disgust Glamorgan ree

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Glamorgan Reeve Bev MacDuff is disgusted that her husband has been publicly accused of stealing her competitors' campaign signs.

The Minden OPP received an "anonymous tip" that Bradley MacDuff had stolen more than 60 campaign signs and stored them in their garage. Last Tuesday, Mr. MacDuff was stopped by a police

officer and told of the accusation. Although the officer did not have a search warrant, Mr. MacDuff invited him to search all the buildings at the MacDuffs' Gooderham home. No signs were found.

"It's a sad state of affairs when politics gets this bad and dirty," says Mrs. MacDuff, who is campaigning to retain her position as reeve. "I'm more disgusted than anything else to know someone would go to this degree in a

municipal election... This is horrendous."

Last week, one of Mrs. MacDuff's opponents, Councillor Lorrie Saville, phoned the Echo to say that more than 60 campaign signs had been stolen. Saville said rumours had been circulating about who was responsible, although no one had been charged by the police.

The timing couldn't be worse for the MacDuffs. "How convenient it gets in the paper the day

the police want to seal premises," Mrs. MacDuff said. "My husband told the police he had nothing because he had nothing."

All last week, her husband asked about the search whether he stole the signs or not. It was a very distressing because it was a member of Glamorgan Police

Please turn to page 8

Health Services Board backs bed consolidation

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

The Acting Health Services Board has agreed with the principle of consolidating the county's acute care beds in Haliburton.

In an 11-3 vote at Wednesday night's meeting at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Minden, the board voted in favour of Bev MacDuff's motion to

- consolidate up to 19 acute care beds at the Haliburton Hospital
- provide five to seven stabilization beds at Hyland Crest
- provide 24-hour emergency care at the Hyland Crest site

"It starts the negotiation process," MacDuff says. "You can't negotiate when you don't

know what you're negotiating... If you can't accomplish all of it, let's try to accomplish some of it."

Several board members had problems with the second and third part of the motion but agreed that the motion moved the process forward.

One of the biggest problems facing the board is that can only spend the \$10.6-million approved by the Ministry of Health last December. This money must also pay for the construction of 30 long-term care beds at the Haliburton site and the upgrading of Hyland Crest.

Given these financial restrictions, it seems unlikely the board would be able to afford even five stabilization beds. Both the exec-

utive director of the Haliburton Kawartha, Pine Ridge Health Unit, Marshall Elliott, and the executive director of St. Joseph's Hospital say that with present funding, "it's not doable."

"You need to be realistic about what you can afford," Lussing said.

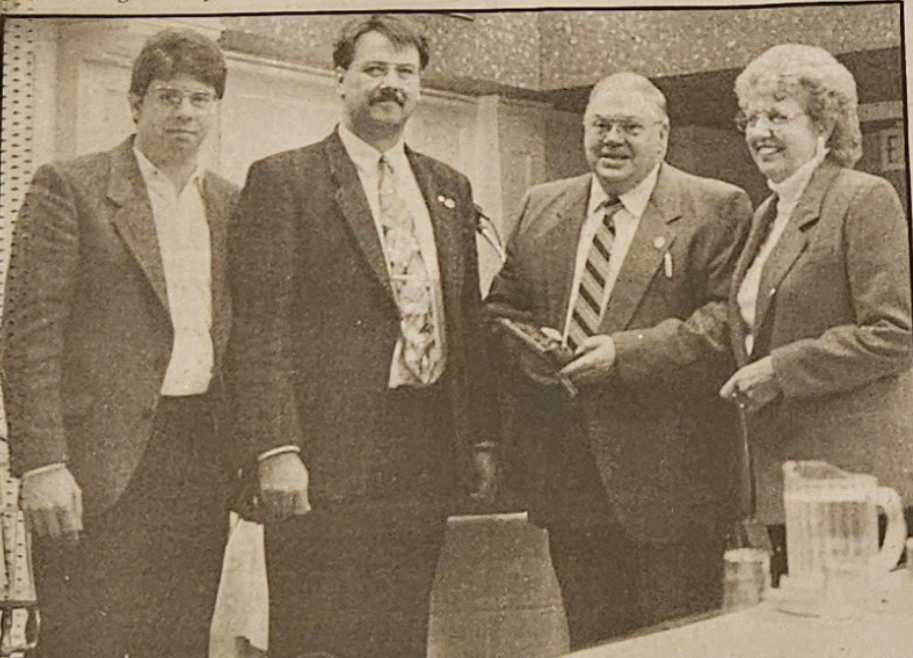
The Ministry is trying to reduce the number of beds across the province, he said. "There's an axiom we use: if you build a bed it's a filled bed... The danger of (using the term stabilization beds) is people will think it will be a semi-hospital. Every urgent care facility will have them but they're not true in-patient beds."

(In past discussions, the Ministry has talked of having an

Please turn to page 14



UPHILL BATTLE: Students running in Cardiff Public School's cross-country meet on Friday make the long the final hill of the course. Children from all of the county's seven elementary schools took part in the competition. Pictures of the winners can be found on Page 8.



Westside Jug wins Business of

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

They are the perfect example of what it takes for a business to survive in the fast-changing, make-or-break 1990s. A strong business sense and devotion to the community are among the many reasons why the Moore family's Westside Jug City has stayed on top against all odds and circumstances. Those are also some of the attributes that earned them the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce Business Award of the Year.

What began with just 700 square feet 14 years ago in Gravenhurst as a typical Mom and Pop operation called West Side Variety and Discount, the Westside Jug City franchise (under the parent company

Bracebridge, Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls.

As social and business leaders in the region, Ray and Gloria Moore and their eight children (sons Brian, Keith and Scott, daughter Rawn and son-in-law Doug Brown all are involved in the business while son Daryl and his wife Kelly have opened a bowling alley on the floor below the Minden store) have contributed to just about every aspect of community life.

"No matter whether it was minor hockey, men's soccer, children's baseball, Santa Claus parades and high school scholarships, the Moore family and Westside Jug City always seemed to be there for all of us," said Bryan Brown in presenting the award.

For those reasons it was only a matter of time before the commu-

help pick up the February fire damage to the Hwy 35 location. They were back in business and better than ever. Months is a testament to the community support of everyone for us."

In a brief acceptance speech, Mrs. Moore thanked the community for its support of everyone for us."

Ray Moore first learned to figure out the community support after heart rending weren't left to think how in this co-

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